



**PRIME MINISTER**

21 December 1975

FOR PRESS

A committee has been appointed to review Government expenditure and recommend on ways to eliminate waste and duplication within and between Government departments and between Commonwealth and State Government departments.

The committee will be under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Bland, and will be known as the Administrative Review Committee. It will begin its work immediately.

The Committee will investigate Government programmes and services and examine ways that activities may be curtailed without a significant effect on administration.

It will advise on activities whose benefits do not appear commensurate with their costs, and on changes in arrangements that might be made to produce economies.

The Committee will examine and report on the degree of Commonwealth Government involvement in supervising expenditure by the States of funds supplied by the Commonwealth, and on avoiding unnecessary duplication and overlapping of Commonwealth and State activities.

The Government intends that the economies shall be made without disrupting essential programmes and without disrupting programmes for which contracts have already been let.

The Committee's work will be concentrated on specific activities. It will be complementary to the work of the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration which is generally concerned with principles.

Arrangements have been made to ensure that the Administrative Review Committee has access to material already assembled by the Royal Commission.

I will be writing to the State Premiers inviting the full cooperation of their Governments in the work of the Committee.

Other members are: Mr John Reid who is Chairman of James Hardie Asbestos Limited, Hardie Trading Limited, Mercantile Credits Limited and a Director of BHP Company Limited, Mr John Taylor who is a Commissioner of the Public Service Board and Mr Gerald Gleeson, a member of the New South Wales Public Service Board. Mr Gleeson will take part in the Committee's inquiries into Commonwealth/State duplication.

The terms of reference are:

1. In light of the Government's desire to effect economies in the use of resources and improve Commonwealth/State administrative relationships, the Committee is requested -

to examine the programmes, services and other activities of Departments and Agencies, statutory or otherwise associated with Departments, (not being tribunals or trading corporations) and to report to the Prime Minister

- (1) On possible means of improving Commonwealth/State administrative arrangements with particular reference to the degree of Commonwealth involvement in the supervision of State expenditure of Commonwealth financial assistance, and to the avoidance of unnecessary duplication and overlapping of activities.

(2) those within the Commonwealth's administration -

(a) that might be curtailed or terminated without significant effect on administration

(b) whose benefits do not appear commensurate with their administrative costs.

(c) where changes in administrative arrangements might produce resource economies.

(3) cases that come to notice where -

(a) Departmental or Agency practices or procedures appear to prejudice the most effective, efficient or economical discharge of activities.

(b) there appear to be policy anomalies or conflicts.

2. The Committee should identify, in each case, the consequences of implementing its conclusions and the resulting economies.

3. The Committee should have regard to the Government's desire that changes it proposes should not compromise the efficient delivery of social services.

4. The Committee should consult with the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration to obtain the benefit of material available to it and judgements it may have made.

5. The Committee should report progressively.

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